

CONCEPTS ABOUT HOME ECONOMICS HELD BY MOTHERS OF NINTH-GRADE  
HOMEMAKING PUPILS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR A JUNIOR  
HIGH SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

by

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## CHAPTER I

### BACKGROUND FOR THE PROBLEM

Effective programs of home economics in the public schools can be a bridge between the home and the school. Jenkins and Gonafay explained that "for home economics teaching to be effective, students must have the opportunity to practice in their everyday life what they are learning at school."<sup>1</sup>

For many years homemaking teachers have recognized the importance of gaining the cooperation of parents, particularly the mothers, in carrying on their program. When parents understand what the school is attempting to do for their children, a closer, more meaningful, relationship can be built between classroom experiences and the home.

Parental influence is extremely important in the pupil's motivation and success in school. Fleck pointed out the important role of parents in motivating their children. She supported her writings with the studies of McClelland in which he found that "students with high achievement scores on their tests had mothers and fathers who set high standards

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<sup>1</sup>Gladys Jenkins and Katherine Gonafay, "Home Economics Can Be a Bridge," Journal of the National Education Association, 52:21, December, 1963.



of excellence and who rewarded their children for achievement."<sup>1</sup> One recommendation was for teachers and parents to become better acquainted so they could work together effectively.

Some parents and some educators criticize homemaking teachers for not meeting with parents, and home economics education for not fulfilling adequately its obligations to young women and their families. Otto suggested that homemaking teachers have relied too much on what they taught in the past. She said:

Critics within the profession of home economics, as well as many outside, are disturbed when program practices exist which were suited to society a decade ago.<sup>2</sup>

Because of some obsolete practices, home economics in the secondary school has sometimes been categorized as non-academic and, therefore, nonessential.

It appears important, then, that teachers of home economics provide meaningful, appropriate, and up-to-date learnings and that avenues of communication between parents and teachers be kept open so that both can work together effectively.

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<sup>1</sup>Henrietta Fleck, "The Meaning of Motivation," Practical/Forecast, 9:59, November, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Arleen Otto, "Can We Afford Obsolescence?," Journal of Home Economics, 55:625, October, 1963.



## I. THE SITUATION

Unlike the subjects labeled as "academic," such as mathematics and English, home economics is usually not a required course on the secondary level. In the Wichita, Kansas, school system, for example, home economics is required only in the eighth grade. It is an elective in all grades from nine through twelve, with limited selected enrollment in the seventh grade.

In the latter, junior high school counselors work with grade school counselors and teachers to choose pupils who, for one reason or another, will probably not remain in high school to be graduated. Each day these pupils attend two hours of homemaking, these classes substituting for science and art. Some art and science are included in these homemaking classes.

In order to understand better the homemaking program of Wichita, it is helpful to take a look at the city. Known as the "air capital of the world," Wichita has a population of 280,000 persons, many of whom are transient aircraft workers. They move from one part of the city to another so that all of the homemaking classes in Wichita must follow the same curriculum in somewhat the same order or transient pupils would miss some learnings and repeat others. A common background of junior high school home economics learnings

also provides a basis for development of the home economics programs in the senior high school. In 1961 the homemaking teachers and city supervisors of Wichita developed homemaking curriculum guides for each grade level, eight through twelve. In these guides teachers and supervisors have identified content and sequence for all home economics courses for Wichita.

There are fifteen junior high schools in Wichita. Their total eighth-grade enrollment for the fall semester of 1964 was 2,211. The ninth-grade enrollment for the same semester was 1,109. This means a 50 per cent decrease in enrollment from the eighth grade (required) to the ninth grade (elective).

The investigator has taught in one of these junior high schools, Hadley Junior High School, for three years and has noted this apparent lack of interest in home economics by ninth graders. During the 1964-65 school term at Hadley there were seven eighth-grade homemaking classes with an average of thirty-three pupils per class, while there were only two ninth-grade classes with an average of twenty-five pupils per class. This sharp decline in ninth-grade enrollment appears to support the opinion of the investigator that home economics has been falling short in attracting pupils.

## II. HOME ECONOMICS AND HOMEMAKING

Home economics is interpreted as

...the field of knowledge and service primarily concerned with strengthening family life through:

- . educating the individual for family living
- . improving the services and goods used by families
- . conducting research to discover the changing needs of individuals and families and the means of satisfying these needs
- . furthering community, national, and world conditions favorable to family living<sup>1</sup>

"Home economics," is a more general term applied to the entire field. "Homemaking" was the term employed in this study to denote those courses in home economics offered in the eighth and ninth grades. In Wichita the junior high school courses are called "Homemaking" and the senior high school courses, "Home Economics."

## III. PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

The purposes of this study were: (1) to identify concepts of home economics held by mothers whose ninth-grade daughters were currently enrolled in the homemaking program of Hadley Junior High School, Wichita, Kansas, and areas of learning these mothers felt should be included in the home-making program; (2) to compare these concepts with present curricula and philosophy; and (3) to recommend procedures

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<sup>1</sup>New Directions, p. 4.

for building an effective public relations program for Hadley Junior High School.

#### IV. PROCEDURES

An opinionaire was sent to all of the mothers whose ninth-grade daughters were currently enrolled in the home-making program of Hadley Junior High School, Wichita, Kansas. A data sheet preceded the opinionaire. The data sheet was composed of short answer questions which asked the respondent about herself and her family.

In order to identify concepts of home economics held by these mothers, Part I of the opinionaire included a list of twenty statements about home economics gleaned from personal interviews by the investigator, from writings in the fields of home economics and home economics education, and from concepts about home economics expressed by writers outside the field of home economics. Each statement was followed by five columns, headed as follows: "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Uncertain," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree." Respondents placed a check in the appropriate column indicating their relative agreement or disagreement with each statement.

Part II dealt with areas of home economics which mothers felt their daughters should have opportunity to

learn about in homemaking classes at the junior high school level and was marked in the same manner.

Part III dealt with sources of information of the respondents and their opinions about the homemaking program of Hadley and asked for suggestions for improving communications between the home and the school. Like the data sheet, these questions required short answers.

Responses to the opinionnaire were summarized and analyzed in relation to the ninth-grade curriculum recommendations as presented in the guide for home economics used in the fifteen Wichita junior high schools and the current philosophy of home economics in the secondary school program. Comparisons were made in relation to the scope and content of homemaking courses; the sex and ability level of pupils; the role of home economics in preparing learners for a vocation and in helping to counteract the drop-out problem; and the desirability of home practice of classroom experiences. Attitudes toward the homemaking program, sources of information about it, and recommendations for expanding communication between the home and school were analyzed. With these comparisons and analyses, recommendations for curriculum enrichment and for augmenting communication between parents and teachers were made.

Prior to administering the opinionnaire to the respondents, it was jury tested by the mothers of the

ninth-grade homemaking pupils at Curtis Junior High School, Wichita, Kansas. Changes recommended by these individuals were incorporated whenever possible.

A newspaper editor assisted with the wording of items for ease of reading by respondents. For ease in communication, junior high school pupils were referred to as students on the opinionnaire because the investigator felt this term would be more easily understood by respondents. A copy of the opinionnaire appears in the Appendix.



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE RELATED TO THE STUDY

Much has been written in regard to content and purposes of home economics education, but only a brief summary of material very closely related to the study at hand will be discussed here.

#### Content of Courses in Home Economics

Because home economics deals with preparation of girls for homemaking and home economics related occupations, it is considered vocational education. Taylor attributed the "short-comings" of America's vocational education to the general confusion and over-organization of the country. He said: "I believe we have sprung into a new section of American history without adequate preparation."<sup>1</sup> He continued his argument by explaining that our educational needs are economic, social, political, and intellectual, but that none of these needs can be met until those planning course content consider the total situation of the child in the family.

Some home economists have outlined programs and offered suggestions for improving the home economics curricula

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<sup>1</sup>Harold Taylor, "The Education of Daughters," Journal of Home Economics, 55:676, November, 1963.



in public schools. Simpson has discussed the major issues in secondary home economics and problems which have particular relevance to home economics education: "(1) preparation for college and increased rigor, . . . (2) development of the ability to think, (3) vocationalism, and (4) preparation for the special roles of women and men in our society."<sup>1</sup> Echoing the arguments of Otto for meeting the ever-changing needs of society, Simpson challenged home economics teachers to prepare pupils for wage-earning; to satisfy individual pupil needs, thereby decreasing the number of young people who drop out of school; and to develop in all pupils an ability to think.

Lowe and Peterson agreed with the final point of Simpson. Lowe encouraged more "depth teaching" when she wrote that classroom "mock weddings" and "tie and sock matching" need to be replaced by subject matter, teaching objectives, and techniques that are fortified with basic understandings which will be applicable to future decisions, regardless of time and situation.<sup>2</sup>

In an experimental study that was developed around problem-solving learning situations for ninth graders,

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<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth Simpson, "Selected Issues and Problems in Secondary Education," Journal of Home Economics, 55:10, January, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Phyllis K. Lowe, "Depth Teaching in Home Economics," American Vocational Journal, 37:22-3, November, 1962.

Peterson charged that home economics courses need to be developmental, rather than merely informational. She wrote:

If we as high school teachers would have our pupils view homemaking as a series of related responsibilities, we may appropriately develop home economics course content around competences to be developed by pupils rather than isolated units of subject matter, often unrelated to each other and unrealistic in scope.<sup>1</sup>

Johnson suggested that teachers recenter the emphasis of home economics teaching. She compared the "old family" which depended upon its skills to produce food, clothing, and shelter, to modern homemakers who are more concerned with the growth and development of family members. She wrote: "While the traditional skills of the homemaker are still important, their role is increasingly a supportive one in the modern urban family."<sup>2</sup>

These authors have criticized the content of courses in home economics and have offered suggestions for improving home economics course content. These criticisms and suggestions for improving home economics programs revolve around various ideas, or concepts of home economics.

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<sup>1</sup>Bernadine H. Peterson, "Problem Solving in Home Economics," Journal of Home Economics, 55:183, March, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Audrey M. Johnson, "Need We Recenter Home Economics Teaching?," Journal of Home Economics, 54:45, January, 1962.

### A Concept of Concepts

In defining concepts the writer found that researchers and educators both agree and disagree in their definitions, while some authors did not offer any definition. One example of the latter is Gall in her article, "Concept Selling of Home Economics," in which she outlined a campaign for selling home economics.<sup>1</sup> Another is Wines who briefly outlined some suggestions for formulating "Concepts for Teaching of Clothing" and concluded her report as follows: . . . the process of concept identification involves considerable frustration--not the least of these being how to arrive at a common understanding of what is a concept."<sup>2</sup>

Other authors discussed concepts with terminology that did not include the word "concept." Bruner coined the phrase "structures of learning" in his presentation by the same name. He wrote:

Every subject has a structure, a rightness, a beauty. It is this structure that provides the underlying simplicity of things, and it is by learning its nature that we come to appreciate the intrinsic meaning of the subject.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Verna McCallum Gall, "Concept Selling of Home Economics," What's New in Home Economics, 28:24-5, May-June, 1964.

<sup>2</sup>Mary E. Wines, "Concepts for Teaching of Clothing," Journal of Home Economics, 55:343, May, 1963.

<sup>3</sup>Jerome S. Bruner, "Structures in Learning," Journal of the National Education Association, 52:26, March, 1963.

He urged consideration of teaching through "learning structures," the benefits of which would include increased intellectual potency and better memory processes.

Other authors spoke specifically about concepts. According to Magrabi and McHugh, each of the sciences and arts is built on a body of ideas and principles which become meaningful only as they are applied to the world around us. A concept, they wrote, should "permit the individual to organize the learning in which he engages...and permit him to deal more intelligently in new situations."<sup>1</sup> Hempel enlarged this definition by distinguishing two types of concepts: those pertaining to classes or properties and those pertaining to relations or functions.<sup>2</sup>

In his review of American history, Tyler noted the role and contributions of education. He substituted "principles" for "concepts" and proposed that "in home economics, as in other fields, emphasis in the future will need to be given to the underlying basic principles."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Frances M. Magrabi and Helen F. McHugh, "Concepts in Teaching Family Finance," Journal of Home Economics, 55:107, February, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>C. G. Hempel, "Fundamentals of Concept Formation in Empirical Science," International Encyclopedia of Unified Science, II, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Ralph W. Tyler, "Education in a World of Change," Journal of Home Economics, 54:533, September, 1962.

Mallory referred to concepts as the fundamental principles or big ideas which can be developed by recognizing and understanding the supporting generalizations which lead to them.<sup>1</sup> Phenix described concepts as "basic ideas, an understanding of which opens the door to an effective grasp of an entire field of knowledge."<sup>2</sup>

These writers have described concepts as ideas, or mental images, which ultimately provide a better understanding of the world. One purpose of this study was to discover the mental images, or concepts, which a selected group of mothers had about home economics. When these concepts were known, certain implications could then be drawn for an effective public relations program.

#### Bases for Developing a Public Relations Program

To do an effective job of educating children, schools need the understanding and support of parents. In fact, the ability of schools to improve, or even to exist, depends upon the support given them by the public. Carr summarized the school-community public relations program of America when he wrote:

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<sup>1</sup>Bernice Mallory, "Home Economics Curriculum Study," American Vocational Journal, 38:36, September, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Phillip H. Phenix, "Key Concepts and the Crisis in Learning," Teachers College Record, 58:140, December, 1956.



Nowhere else in the world do so many citizens from so many walks of life take so much active interest in education as in America. New ideas about the relation of the public to the public schools are in the air; new forms of leadership, finance and structure are taking shape. No one can now foresee or prescribe the outcome in detail. Methods to release and to guide new forces and to relate them to the orderly government of public education have yet to be devised. Here is, I believe, the major problem for educational leadership in the decades ahead.

There is constant interaction between the community and the school. The community affects the school; the school affects the community. Hall and Paolucci said that both benefited when they were sincerely interested in one another. These authors emphasized the importance of the homemaking teacher becoming familiar with her community and listed five reasons why it is advantageous for her to understand it. First of all, the teacher can adapt her program to meet community needs. For example, if there are many young people between the ages of fourteen and twenty who are married, the homemaking program probably should include a course for preparing for marriage.

Secondly, the teacher can enrich the learning experiences of pupils by knowing and using available community resources. For instance, trips to local clothing stores will provide insight for comparative buying of garments. Or, the

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<sup>1</sup>William G. Carr, "The Public and the Public Schools," This is Teaching, p. 288.

community might be moved to the classroom. Home economists from utility companies, case workers from the social agencies, doctors, family lawyers, and the clergy--these and a host of others may add new dimensions to learning.

Recognizing some of the prevailing attitudes and practices of the community can make the teacher more accepting of the ways of life of her pupils, and recognizing prevailing home practices can help the teacher determine what should be taught in specific subject matter areas of home economics. If the teacher knows that a very small proportion of her pupils have sewing machines available in their homes, the teacher might be able to be more realistic in the type of home experience required of pupils.

Finally, Hall and Paolucci said that teachers need to be aware of the power structure or leaders of the community. This facilitates implementation and interpretation of the home economics program. If school board members and the administrative staff see home economics as an important subject matter area in the school, they will support the program both directly and indirectly. Board members may allow funds for carrying out the program effectively and administrators can arrange schedules so that they are conducive to the free election of home economics by a large number of students.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Olive A. Hall and Beatrice Paolucci, Teaching Home Economics, pp. 44-51.



Other authors have advised teachers and educators how they could enhance their public relations programs. McCullar said that in order to get the attention of the public, teachers need to dramatize their story, to tell it as it is happening. Teachers must be accurate, but they must also have showmanship. She compared selling education to selling diamonds. She wrote:

We don't have to add anything to education, any more than the jeweler has to add anything to the diamond in his window. He just polishes it up, puts a black velvet cloth back of it, and, the public passing by is dazzled and impressed.

Lane explained that the public image of a profession depends upon individual images. "But before you teachers can doll up your public image, you first need to study your private image in a magnifying mirror, in the unflattering glare of full daylight." She continued, "You teachers cannot delegate to a public relations counsel--or anyone else--the big improvements in your professional image. That responsibility is yours individually, yours collectively."<sup>2</sup>

These authors have described the importance of public relations and have made suggestions for establishing desirable

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<sup>1</sup>Bernice McCullar, "The School Story is the Big Story," Journal of the National Education Association, 52:12, March, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Laura Lane, "You and Your Public Image," Journal of Home Economics, 52:514, November, 1960.

public relations which homemaking teachers can find useful in their programs. The homemaking teacher is especially concerned with public relations since her work may affect American families directly. She wants the public to know her program, understand it, and best of all, to be enthusiastic about it.

## CHAPTER III

### RESPONSES TO THE OPINIONAIRE

Opinionaires were distributed to all forty-nine homemaking pupils in the two ninth-grade classes at Hadley Junior High School. The opininaire was composed of three parts and a data sheet. Pupils were asked to take the opinionnaires home and to ask their mothers to complete and return them to their teacher. Of the forty-nine opinionnaires, forty-seven, or 94 per cent, were returned.

#### The Data Sheet

The data sheet revealed that forty-four opinionnaires had been completed by mothers, two by step mothers, and one by a grandmother (Item 1).<sup>1</sup> It provided a brief description of the respondent and her family. For instance, Item 2 indicated that sixteen (34 per cent) of the forty-seven respondents had worked outside the home for pay during the past year, while thirty-one (66 per cent) had not. Three of the sixteen respondents who had earned money during the last year had taken care of children (Item 3). Two had worked as nurses; two had worked as secretaries. Other types of work which respondents had performed for pay included housework,

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<sup>1</sup>Item numbers refer to items on the opininaire.

ironing, sales, sewing, waitress, photography, meat wrapping, cashiering, and bookkeeping.

There was greater variety reported in the occupations of husbands (Item 5). Sales work (six), building construction (five), and office work (four), were the most popular occupations, while three husbands were reported to be employed in each of the following occupations: aircraft plant work, engineering, and truck driving. Two husbands were involved in each of the following types of work: civil service; mechanical; radio, television, or newspaper; and welding. Other kinds of work which were indicated once were lithography, sheet metal, carpet laying, private detective, cement, architectural, metal repair, oil related, and medical or dental. One husband was self employed. In contrast to the population of Wichita as a whole, few of these occupations require frequent moving. The families of the pupils who enroll in ninth grade homemaking at Hadley Junior High School apparently are not as transient as Wichita families in general.

Respondents reported larger families (Item 6) than the 1960 national average of 3.3 persons per family with thirty-nine (82 per cent) of them having three or more children.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"The 1960 Census and the Nation's Families," Journal of Home Economics, 52:13, January, 1960.

The number of children reported ranged from one to nine. Six families had either one or two children. There was one "only child." More families (nineteen) reported three children than any other number.

Thirty-one respondents (66 per cent) reported that one child had been enrolled in at least one semester of homemaking prior to this semester (Item 7). Thirteen families included two children and one family included three children who had completed a minimum of one semester of homemaking. Therefore the opinions of respondents about home economics tended to be based, at least in part, upon the experiences of one or two children in each household.

A wide variation in their own enrollment in home economics courses was reported by respondents (Item 4). The time of highest enrollment was in the high school years. Fifteen respondents reported they had taken one year of home economics in high school. Nine reported two years, four had been enrolled for three years, and one had taken four years of high school home economics. Thirteen of these respondents who had taken home economics in high school had also been enrolled in homemaking in junior high school. In addition, eight more respondents had taken homemaking in junior high school, but had not taken home economics in either high school or college. Only two respondents indicated experiences in home economics on the college level. One respondent had

been enrolled in home economics for one semester in college and another had been enrolled for three and one-half years, but both had taken home economics in junior high school and high school. The average enrollment period in homemaking prior to college for respondents was 1.68 semesters.

A "typical" mother of a ninth-grade homemaking pupil of Hadley Junior High School might be described as not employed outside the home, with a husband who was either a salesman, a building construction worker, or an office worker. She had three children, one or two of whom had been or was currently enrolled in a homemaking course, while she herself had taken some homemaking either as a junior high or a senior high school pupil.

### Concepts about Home Economics

Part I of the opinionaire, including Items 8 through 27, asked the respondent to indicate her relative agreement or disagreement with twenty statements about home economics by placing a check in the appropriate column to the right. These column headings represented a five-point scale as follows: "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Uncertain," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree." In the following discussion statements are listed in rank order of respondents' agreement with them.



Concept A - scope and content of courses. Five statements dealt with course or curriculum content in home economics. These statements were:

11. Homemaking is a group of related skills and responsibilities and should be taught so that students see the total picture.

9. Today's emphasis in homemaking should be upon the growth and development of family members and relationships with other people.

23. The main concern in homemaking courses is a better understanding of home and family living.

18. Less class time should be spent on foods and clothing so that more time could be given to learning to understand and care for children, time and money management, and family relations.

15. Most homemaking class time is spent on foods and clothing because it takes so long to master these skills.

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed (98 per cent) that pupils should be guided to see relationships between skills and responsibilities in the field of homemaking. Seventy-five per cent felt that today's emphasis in homemaking should be upon the growth and development of family members and relationships with other people and that the main concern in homemaking courses is a better understanding of home and family living (62 per cent).

However, respondents were uncertain (24 per cent) and tended to disagree (47 per cent) as to whether less class time should be spent on foods and clothing so that more time could be spent on understanding and caring for children, time



and money management, and family relationships. They agreed (64 per cent) with the statement that most homemaking class time is spent on foods and clothing because it takes so long to master these skills.

Responses to the five statements dealing with concept A, scope and content of courses, appear in Table I.

Concept B - sex of pupils. Five statements dealt with inherent values of homemaking courses for boys and/or girls and whether these courses should be elective or required for these pupils. These statements were:

19. Boys should be able to take homemaking courses if they want to.
21. Because men are a part of a family, boys should be required to take at least one homemaking course.
22. Depending upon what a girl learns at home, homemaking courses may or may not be valuable to the student.
17. Girls do not need homemaking courses at school because they receive this training at home.
10. Since boys must prepare for "earning a living," it is probably not desirable for them to take any courses in homemaking.

All but two respondents (95 per cent) felt that homemaking should be an elective for boys, while considerably fewer respondents (37 per cent) thought that boys should be required to take at least one homemaking course. Only twenty per cent of the respondents thought that it was desirable for

TABLE I

RESPONSES DEALING WITH CONCEPT A, SCOPE  
AND CONTENT OF COURSES

Statements	Per cent Responding				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-certain	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree
11. Homemaking is a group of related skills and responsibilities and should be taught so that students see the total picture.	27	71	2		
9. Today's emphasis in homemaking should be upon the growth and development of family members and relationships with other people.	13	62	11	13	
23. The main concern in homemaking courses is a better understanding of home and family living.	13	49	16	22	
18. Less class time should be spent on foods and clothing so that more time could be given to learning to understand and care for children, time and money management, and family relations.	4	24	24	45	2
15. Most homemaking class time is spent on foods and clothing because it takes so long to master these skills.	2	62	16	20	

boys to prepare for "earning a living," even if it meant that they would not be able to take a homemaking course.

Only two respondents (4 per cent) claimed that girls do not need homemaking because they receive this training at home. The majority of respondents (93 per cent) did not feel that girls received this training at home and, therefore, needed homemaking at school. About one-third of the respondents (37 per cent) felt that homemaking courses may or may not be valuable to a girl, depending upon what she learned at home.

Table II shows the responses to the five statements dealing with concept B, sex of pupils.

Concept C - ability level of pupils. Three statements dealt with whether enrollment in homemaking classes should include pupils of all ability levels and whether homemaking classes should be heterogeneous or homogeneous in nature. These statements were:

12. Homemaking classes are for all students, superior, as well as average and slow learners.
8. Students benefit from knowing and working with others of different abilities.
16. Generally speaking, homemaking classes are designed for slow and average students.

Nearly all respondents (97 per cent) agreed that homemaking classes are for pupils of all ability levels and

TABLE II

RESPONSES DEALING WITH CONCEPT B,  
SEX OF PUPILS

Statements	Per cent Responding				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-certain	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree
19. Boys should be able to take homemaking courses if they want to.	13	82	2		2
21. Because men are part of a family, boys should be required to take at least one home-making course.	4	33	20	40	2
22. Depending upon what a girl learns at home, homemaking courses may or may <u>not</u> be valuable to the student.	4	33	9	49	4
17. Girls do <u>not</u> need homemaking courses at school because they receive this training at home.	2	2	2	69	24
10. Since boys must prepare for "earning a living," it is probably <u>not</u> desirable for them to take any course in homemaking.		20	13	51	16

that pupils profit from knowing and working with others of abilities different from their own (93 per cent). To support these opinions, the majority of respondents (85 per cent) disagreed with the statement that homemaking classes are designed for slow and average pupils.

The reactions of respondents regarding concept C, ability level of pupils, are reported in Table III.

TABLE III

RESPONSES DEALING WITH CONCEPT C,  
ABILITY LEVEL OF PUPILS

Statements	Per cent Responding				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-certain	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree
12. Homemaking classes are for all students, superior, as well as average and slow learners.	33	64	2		
8. Students benefit from knowing and working with others of different abilities.	13	80	2	4	
16. Generally speaking, homemaking classes are designed for slow and average students.		9	7	69	16

Concept D - role of home economics in vocational education. Three statements dealt with homemaking classes as vocational education for girls. These were:

13. Homemaking classes prepare girls for taking care of a family and/or a career.

27. The job possibilities in homemaking should be emphasized in order to prepare girls for earning a living.

25. Too much emphasis in homemaking classes is placed upon preparing girls for working outside the home.

Most of the respondents (93 per cent) felt that homemaking classes prepared girls both for taking care of a family and for a career. Seventy-four per cent believed that job possibilities should be emphasized in homemaking. Slightly more than one-half (57 per cent) of the respondents did not feel that too much emphasis in homemaking classes has been placed upon preparing girls for a vocation.

Responses to the three statements dealing with concept D, role of home economics in vocational education, are presented on Table IV.

Concept E - home economics as an encouragement to stay in school. Two statements involved the attitudes of respondents toward the role of home economics with regard to the school drop-out problem. These were:

26. Homemaking courses can be of great value to the pupil who may drop out of school.



TABLE IV

RESPONSES DEALING WITH CONCEPT D, ROLE OF  
HOME ECONOMICS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Statements	Per cent Responding				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-certain	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree
13. Homemaking classes prepare girls for taking care of a family and/or a career.	24	69	2	4	
27. The job possibilities in homemaking should be emphasized in order to prepare girls for earning a living.	16	58	13	13	
25. Too much emphasis in homemaking classes is placed upon preparing girls for working outside the home.		13	29	53	4

20. Homemaking courses are of little value to students who will probably not finish high school.

Respondents overwhelmingly (93 per cent) thought that homemaking courses could be of great value to the pupil who may drop out of school. Respondents affirmed these contentions when they disagreed (91 per cent) that homemaking courses are of little value to pupils who may drop out of school.



The following table shows the responses to the two statements concerning concept E, home economics as an encouragement to stay in school.

TABLE V

RESPONSES DEALING WITH CONCEPT E, HOME ECONOMICS  
AS AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO STAY IN SCHOOL

Statements	Per cent Responding				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Un-certain	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree
26. Homemaking courses can be of great value to the pupil who may drop out of school.	11	82	2	4	
20. Homemaking courses are of little value to students who will probably <u>not</u> finish high school.	2	4	2	64	27

Concept F - desirability of home practice of classroom experiences. Two statements measured importance respondents attached to home practice of homemaking activities learned at school. These were:

24. Practice at home of the experiences gained from homemaking classes is not desirable.

14. Practice at home is needed if the homemaking student is going to benefit the most from her classroom experiences.

Response to both of these statements indicated almost unanimous support for home practice. Only one respondent (2 per cent) said that home practice of classroom experiences is not desirable. One respondent was uncertain about the desirability of home practice, but all other respondents (98 per cent) thought home practice was necessary if the homemaking pupil was going to benefit the most from her classroom experiences.

Responses to the two statements dealing with concept F, desirability of home practice of classroom experiences, appear on Table VI.

TABLE VI

RESPONSES DEALING WITH CONCEPT F, DESIRABILITY OF  
HOME PRACTICE OF CLASSROOM EXPERIENCES

Statements	Per cent Responding				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un- certain	Dis- agree	Strongly Disagree
24. Practice at home is needed if the home-making student is going to benefit the most from her classroom experiences.	42	57	2		
14. Practice at home of the experiences gained from homemaking classes is not desirable.		2		51	47

In summarizing Part I of the opinionaire, Table VII lists those statements which received the greatest agreement, those statements with which 50 per cent or more of the respondents either "agreed" or "strongly agreed." Those statements which received the most disagreement, with which 50 per cent or more of the respondents disapproved, are listed in Table VIII.

Respondents most strongly supported the following concepts: home practice of classroom homemaking experiences is beneficial for the pupil (99 per cent); homemaking should be taught so that pupils see that it is a group of related skills and responsibilities (98 per cent); homemaking classes are for all pupils, superior, as well as average and slow learners (97 per cent); pupils benefit from knowing and working with others of different abilities (93 per cent); homemaking classes prepare girls for taking care of a family and for working outside the home (93 per cent); and homemaking courses can be of great value to the pupil who may drop out of school (93 per cent). All of these concepts received over 90 per cent support from the respondents.

Those concepts which received 90 per cent disagreement by the respondents were: home practice of experiences gained from homemaking classes is not desirable (98 per cent); girls do not need homemaking courses at school because they receive this training at home (93 per cent); and homemaking courses

TABLE VII

## STATEMENTS WHICH RECEIVED THE GREATEST AGREEMENT

Statement	Per cent Responding		
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Total
24. Practice at home is needed if the homemaking student is going to benefit the most from her classroom experiences.	42	57	99
11. Homemaking is a group of related skills and responsibilities and should be taught so that students see the total picture.	27	71	98
12. Homemaking classes are for all students, superior, as well as average and slow learners.	33	64	97
19. Boys should be able to take homemaking courses if they want to.	13	82	95
8. Students benefit from knowing and working with others of different abilities.	13	80	93
13. Homemaking classes prepare girls for taking care of a family and/or a career.	24	69	93
26. Homemaking courses can be of great value to the student who may drop out of school.	11	82	93
9. Today's emphasis in homemaking should be upon the growth and development of family members and relationships with other people.	13	62	75
27. The job possibilities in homemaking should be emphasized in order to prepare girls for earning a living.	16	58	74
15. Most homemaking class time is spent on foods and clothing because it takes so long to master these skills.	2	62	64
23. The main concern in homemaking courses is a better understanding of home and family living.	13	49	62

TABLE VIII

## STATEMENTS WHICH RECEIVED THE GREATEST DISAGREEMENT

Statement	Per cent Responding		
	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
14. Practice at home of the experiences gained from home-making classes is <u>not</u> desirable.	51	47	98
17. Girls do <u>not</u> need home-making courses at school because they receive this training at home.	69	24	93
20. Homemaking courses are of little value to students who will probably <u>not</u> finish high school.	64	27	91
16. Generally speaking, home-making classes are designed for slow and average students.	69	16	85
10. Since boys must prepare for "earning a living," it is probably <u>not</u> desirable for them to take any courses in homemaking.	51	16	67
25. Too much emphasis in homemaking classes is placed upon preparing girls for working outside the home.	53	4	57
22. Depending upon what a girl learns at home, homemaking courses may or may <u>not</u> be valuable to the student.	49	4	53



are of little value to pupils who will probably not finish high school (91 per cent).

Attitudes expressed by respondents appear to be consistent. The concept which received the most support, as illustrated on both tables, was the importance of home practice of classroom homemaking experiences. Respondents also felt strongly that homemaking classes are valuable to all pupils, superior, as well as other pupils, and that they are especially important for all girls and for those pupils who may not remain in school. They were aware of the dual purpose for learnings for girls in home economics, those related to homemaking and to preparation for gainful employment. At the same time, they realized that homemaking courses have potential value for boys.

#### Areas of Homemaking

Part II of the opinionnaire (Items 28 through 41) was marked in the same manner as Part I, but was concerned with the areas of home economics mothers felt pupils should have opportunity to study in the homemaking classes at Hadley Junior High School. Fourteen areas of home economics, suggested by Lawson in "Education for Improved Family Living," were listed.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Dorothy S. Lawson, "Education for Improved Family Living," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 48:15-7, December, 1964.



Responses indicated general agreement and support for including all of the areas listed. Of the total number of responses, 93 per cent were in favor of ("Strongly Agree" or "Agree") including all of the listed areas; 3 per cent were uncertain about some areas; and 4 per cent disagreed about some areas. No respondent strongly disagreed that any of the areas should be included in the homemaking program at Hadley. One respondent disagreed with including any of the areas except using money wisely, sewing and repairing simple garments, planning simple meals, and preparing simple meals. She explained, "The items with which I disagree are, I believe, largely responsibilities of parents and should be taught in the home." Table IX shows agreement expressed with areas of homemaking to be included in homemaking classes at Hadley Junior High School.

Item 42 was a completion item which asked respondents to suggest additional areas which they thought should be included in homemaking classes. Areas suggested included child care (three), the proper way to iron (one), money management (one), personal appearance (one), care of the body (one), food preserving ideas (one), and simple gardening (one). Actually, all of these areas of home economics are included in the eighth and ninth grade homemaking curricula in Wichita although they were not mentioned on the list of areas of home economics on the opinionnaire since they do not

TABLE IX

AGREEMENT EXPRESSED WITH AREAS OF HOMEMAKING TO BE INCLUDED  
IN HOMEMAKING CLASSES AT HADLEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Area of Homemaking <sup>1</sup>	Per cent Responding				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-certain	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree
34. Planning simple meals	40	60			
39. Preparing foods and simple meals	40	60			
40. Sharing responsibilities in the home	40	56		4	
29. Using money wisely	38	58		4	
35. Performing household tasks	36	60		4	
38. Being a good friend	33	58	7	2	
30. Getting along with family members	31	58	4	7	
33. Understanding herself as a person	31	58	7	4	
37. Shopping for groceries	31	56	4	9	
41. Learning to choose clothes for herself	31	64		4	
31. Sewing and repairing simple garments	29	71			
28. Understanding children	24	62	9	4	
32. Caring for children	24	62	7	7	
36. Understanding the family's growth and development	22	69	4	4	

<sup>1</sup> Lawson, loc. cit.

receive major attention in Wichita and had not been suggested as special areas by Lawson.<sup>1</sup>

Support for and Sources of Information and Opinions about the Present Homemaking Program

Item 43 was developed to ascertain the amount or degree of encouragement mothers would give their daughters to enroll in another homemaking course. One of the following three sentence stems was to be completed by the respondent.

A. I will encourage my daughter to take more home economics because

B. I will not encourage my daughter to take more home economics because

C. I would like my daughter to take more home economics, but she cannot or will not because

Seventy-six per cent of the respondents completed Sentence Stem A, thus indicating they would encourage daughters to take additional work in home economics. In general, respondents appeared to feel that these courses would be helpful to their daughters, both at home and on the job. Five responses, considered typical, were as follows:

I feel that no girl can get too much training in homemaking.

I want her to be a good homemaker, to keep house, and to be able to sew and care for her family.

The more a girl knows and practices the simple arts of homemaking, the better she will be at any job.

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<sup>1</sup>Lawson, loc. cit.

It's essential to everyday life.

I feel all of these experiences are good and each one of them helps prepare her for the future. I don't have time to teach her a lot of these things. I have to work.

Four mothers (8 per cent) explained that they would not encourage their daughters to take more home economics (Sentence B).

She needs to apply herself to other areas that I can't help her in, such as math, civics, etc.

I believe she can use the time to better advantage.

I think she has enough experience and responsibility already and is able to carry on household duties to the fullest.

Her schedule is filled.

Eight mothers (6 per cent) completed Sentence C, giving explanations why their daughters could not or would not take more home economics. Six respondents reported that the class schedules of their daughters were too full. Another indicated that her daughter did not receive enough individual help, while another said her daughter already would have completed three years of homemaking.

On the whole, the responses to desirability of continued home economics education for daughters indicated great interest in and support for homemaking courses. Those respondents who disagreed had a variety of reasons why their daughters would not enroll in additional homemaking classes, but the most common reason was crowded class schedules.

Thirty-three respondents replied to Item 44, which asked them to indicate one of the best things about the home-making classes at Hadley. Nine respondents (27 per cent) recognized that their daughters were learning to cook and/or sew. Six mothers (17 per cent) liked the modern equipment, facilities, and teaching methods. Six (17 per cent) liked the interest of the teachers in each girl, were glad that their daughter had this classroom association with other girls, and were pleased that their daughters could take home-making in all three grades. A variety of other answers were offered, some of which were:

In cooking, they teachers want you pupils to make some of the things at home which naturally gives more experience.

Their my daughters' sewing classes have created an interest in this art which I couldn't instill in my girls.

It has helped \_\_\_\_\_ gain a small sense of responsibility.

Another liked what her daughter learned about health and child care. Two respondents explained that they could not answer this and the following two items because they did not feel that they knew enough about the homemaking classes.

Item 45 asked for the chief criticism which the respondents had about the homemaking classes at Hadley and Item 46 asked how this fault could be eased or eliminated. Twenty-five respondents did not answer Item 45 or indicated



that they did not have any criticism. Twenty offered criticisms. Seventy per cent of those responding said that more individual attention was needed or that classes were too large. Two respondents (10 per cent) indicated that neatness was not stressed enough. Others (20 per cent) said that teachers "should be more progressive with students," "don't use enough practicality," or emphasize it home economics too much." Other respondents did not like "the type of cooking that is done," and suggested that "more home study and practice should be used."

Seventeen mothers made suggestions for easing or eliminating these faults. More and smaller classes and more teachers were suggested by most of those responding (74 per cent). One mother wrote:

There should be individual teachers for each student.

Other recommendations included:

Let students elect instead of requiring them to take it homemaking .

Teach the girls to fix everyday foods.

Many mothers need practical tips and short cuts in sewing.

Items 47 and 48 were developed to discover their chief and secondary sources of information about homemaking classes and the homemaking program at Hadley. The majority of the twenty-seven responding to these items (89 per cent) indicated



that their chief source of information about the homemaking classes had been their daughter or "child." Other chief sources of information were "the girls" (7 per cent) or the "friends in her class" (4 per cent).

The latter proved to be the chief secondary source of information about the homemaking classes at Hadley (Item 48). Seventeen (74 per cent) of the twenty-three replies were "neighbor girls" or "my daughter's friends." Other secondary sources of information were open house (two), the teacher (one), mothers (one), my niece (one), and the principal of Hadley (one).

Respondents were then asked how they could be helped to know more about homemaking classes at Hadley (Items 49-52). These items and the number of responses to each were:

49. I could learn more about homemaking and the  
homemaking classes at Hadley by (32 responses)

50. Hadley could help me to know more about its  
homemaking classes by (16 responses)

51. Our homemaking teacher could help me know  
more about the homemaking classes at Hadley by  
(25 responses)

52. Wichita could help us to know more about  
homemaking classes by (14 responses)

All of these questions were similar in design in order to focus attention on four different aspects of public relations.

In general, the most frequent suggestions for ways to learn about the program were visiting with the teachers

(56 per cent), and attending or visiting classes in session (16 per cent). One respondent wrote, "I believe I am learning all that I possibly can by simply asking my daughter constantly what she is doing--which I consider the best way."

Respondents indicated that Hadley could help them to know more about its homemaking classes (Item 50) by sending samples home; by bulletins, notices, or pamphlets (40 per cent); conferences and inviting mothers to visit (40 per cent); asking for more home assistance (1 per cent); or style shows (1 per cent). Another respondent said, "Homemaking teachers could help more," but was not specific as to how they could help.

The twenty-five suggestions given as to how the homemaking teacher could help respondents know more about the homemaking classes at Hadley (Item 51) included, in addition to those mentioned above, the following: "Encourage the student to tell more to the parent" (4 per cent), "home assignments" (4 per cent), and "demonstrating more about it" (not clear) (4 per cent). One respondent indicated she preferred to have the homemaking teacher spend her time with her daughter rather than work on public relations. "To me, it isn't important for the teacher to spend time informing me. Let her spend more time with the students and the parents will know."

Respondents suggested that Wichita could inform them about homemaking classes (Item 52) by having a column in the newspaper (36 per cent), conferences (14 per cent), more homemaking classes (8 per cent), "outside classes or some combination of parent-student sessions" (8 per cent), "publish information on what the schools of Wichita are doing and how important it is for the child of today to learn what they can" (8 per cent), and "encourage 4-H clubs and extension clubs" (8 per cent). Two other suggestions were "clarify the knowledge of what homemaking classes do other than teach sewing and cooking" and "tell us more about it." Methods suggested by respondents are compiled in Table X.

Item 53 asked respondents if they thought it would be a "good idea" to invite mothers to attend the homemaking classes of their daughters. Twenty-two (70 per cent) of the thirty respondents were in favor of visiting the homemaking classes of their daughters. Some of the reasons expressed were:

We could see the class as a whole.

It would help us to have a better understanding of the teachers' methods.

We could see the progress.

Other respondents (13 per cent) stipulated conditions for visiting classes or were uncertain of their feelings. For instance, one mother said she preferred to visit a class

TABLE X

METHODS SUGGESTED BY MOTHERS TO HELP THEM LEARN ABOUT THE  
HOMEMAKING PROGRAM AT HADLEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Methods Suggested	Times Suggested <sup>1</sup>
Parent-teacher conferences	39
Samples, bulletins, notices, and pamphlets	17
Newspaper column	9
Visits by parents to classes	9
Ask for more home assistance	1
Encourage students to talk to parents more	1
More home assignments	1
School displays	1
Associations with 4-H and extension clubs	1
More teacher demonstrations	1
More homemaking classes	1
Style Show	1
Miscellaneous	<u>5</u>
Total	87

<sup>1</sup>Some respondents made more than one suggestion.  
Some made none.

other than that in which her daughter was enrolled. Another believed that visiting classes would not necessarily be beneficial and that conferences with the teacher might be more helpful. Another explained that she was undecided, but that the girls might enjoy demonstrating what they were learning by showing their mothers at school, rather than at home. One mother did not think visiting was necessary because she would be aware if the girls were "learning and accomplishing." Four respondents (13 per cent) did not want to visit the homemaking classes of their daughters. They seemed to see visiting as a possible distraction to pupils and teachers.

Item 54 asked respondents if they had had opportunity to express their feelings or opinions about homemaking to teachers or administrators prior to the opinionaire and, if so, to tell briefly about the circumstances. Forty-three mothers responded to this item. Slightly more than one-half (53 per cent) said that they had not had previous opportunity to express their feelings. One of them stated, "I have not had any need to." Twelve other respondents (28 per cent) did not complete this item, and eight (19 per cent) said they had expressed opinions prior to the opinionaire. They described the circumstances as during "open house" (three), telephone conversations (one), parent-teacher conferences (one), and other miscellaneous contacts, such as the homemaking teachers'



coffee at the beginning of the year (three). One mother confessed that she had had the opportunity, but had not taken advantage of it, while another said she had visited at the style show and open house, but thought that it was unfair to the teacher, her child, and the other parents waiting to talk with the teacher, to discuss homemaking activities at that time.

Twenty-five respondents completed Item 55, which asked for additional ideas or opinions which the respondents would like to express. Most of these respondents (82 per cent) did not introduce new thoughts, but instead summarized ideas or opinions which had been mentioned earlier in the opinionaire. Others (18 per cent) criticized and/or complemented the home-making program at Hadley. Four typical responses follow.

Girls should learn to do more hand sewing. Most of the sewing at Hadley, as at other schools, is by machine. Also, I sometimes think that teachers aren't as particular as when I went to school.

My daughter had some cooking experience at home, but I feel she has learned much more at school. I was very pleased. Because she knows very little about sewing and I cannot help her with it, she needs more help from her teacher.

I know some things have been held to which mothers were invited, but these were during the day. Like other working mothers, I could not attend. Evening conferences would be nice--perhaps in conjunction with PTA.

I think the girls have learned a lot and have used both cooking and sewing at home.



An analysis of responses as related to present practices and current philosophy of home economics in the junior high school is presented in Chapter IV.

## CHAPTER IV

### COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES IN RELATION TO PRACTICES AND CURRENT PHILOSOPHY

Reactions to the opinionaire indicated respondents' knowledge of and attitudes toward present practices in the homemaking program of Hadley Junior High School. When these responses are compared to the present homemaking program of Hadley and to current philosophy of home economics in the secondary school, they may serve as guide lines for establishing an effective public relations program at Hadley.

#### Scope and Content of Courses

The majority of mothers (64 per cent) of the ninth-grade homemaking pupils of Hadley Junior High School realized that most class time is spent on the areas of clothing and foods. They were uncertain (24 per cent), although they tended to agree (48 per cent), that the amount of attention given to these areas should not be shortened. No respondent "strongly disagreed" that any of the areas of home economics should not be included in the program. They overwhelmingly agreed (98 per cent), however, that homemaking courses should be taught so that pupils see that homemaking is a group of related skills and responsibilities. These findings suggest that mothers are aware that most class time is spent on the areas of foods and clothing and that they tend to approve of

this, as long as other areas of home economics are included and taught along with foods and clothing as an integrated subject.

The Wichita curriculum guide suggests areas of home economics which should be studied and the number of lessons which should be spent on each area.<sup>1</sup> Developed in 1961, the curriculum guide has not been revised during the last four years and is only partially structured around concepts and generalizations. However, it does provide a suggested program for the ninth-grade homemaking students of Wichita. By comparing the number of lessons recommended for each area to the total number of lessons in the guide, percentages were obtained which could be compared to the percentages reported by Coon on the scope and content of ninth-grade homemaking courses in Kansas and the United States, as reported by a random sample of teachers.<sup>2</sup> These percentages are reported on Table XI.

The Wichita curriculum guide recommended more time, 41 per cent, for the area of clothing than for any other area of home economics. The homemaking teachers of Kansas reported that 35 per cent of their class time was spent in the area of

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<sup>1</sup>Curriculum Guide, Table of Contents.

<sup>2</sup>Beulah I. Coon, Home Economics in the Public Secondary Schools, pp. 102-3.

TABLE XI

COMPARISON OF SCOPE AND CONTENT OF NINTH GRADE HOMEMAKING  
COURSES IN THE UNITED STATES, KANSAS, AND HADLEY  
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, WICHITA, KANSAS

Area and Aspect of Study	Percentage of Time <sup>1</sup>		
	Recommended for Hadley <sup>2</sup>	Reported Kansas	Spent <sup>3</sup> National
<u>Clothing Area</u>			
Care of clothing	3		3
Construction of clothing	28	29	21
Grooming	3	4	5
Renovation of clothing			
Selection and purchase of clothing	2		2
Wardrobe planning for oneself	2	2	2
Wardrobe planning for family			
Textiles	3		
Total	41	35	33
<u>Foods Area</u>			
Food preparation and serving	22	22	16
Food preservation	2		2
Food for special occasions	2		2
Meal management for the family	2	3	2
Meeting individual nutritional needs	3	3	4
Meeting family nutritional needs		2	2
Selection of food in market and costs	3	3	2
Total	34	33	30
<u>Family Relations Area</u>			
Community resources for family welfare			
Family and social relations	3	2	3
Family recreation and hospitality			
Marriage relationships			
Personal and social development	2	3	4
Total	5	5	7

<sup>1</sup> Less than 2 per cent not shown.

<sup>2</sup> Curriculum Guide, loc. cit.

<sup>3</sup> Coon, loc. cit.

Area and Aspect of Study	Percentage of Time <sup>1</sup>		
	Recommended for Hadley <sup>2</sup>	Reported Kansas	Spent <sup>3</sup> National
<u>Child Development Area</u>			
Guidance and understanding of children	2	2	4
Physical care of infants			
Physical care of children			2
Resources for child welfare			
Total	2	2	6
<u>Health and Care of Sick Area</u>			
First aid and home care of sick			2
Home Safety			2
Maintenance of health- individual, community, family			
Total			4
<u>Management Area</u>			
Conservation and wise use of time and energy			
Making management choices and decisions			
Management of finances			
Total			
<u>Consumer Education</u>			
Consumer buying			
Protecting consumer interests			
Other aspects of consumer education			
Total			
<u>Housing Area</u>			
Care of the home	2		2
Choosing and planning a home			
Community housing problems			
Furnishing an individual room	2		3
Renovating of furniture and furnishings			
Selection and care of furnish- ings			
Selection, use, and care of home equipment			
Yard and ground improvement			
Total	4		5

<sup>1</sup> Less than 2 per cent not shown.

<sup>2</sup> Curriculum Guide, loc. cit.

<sup>3</sup> Coon, loc. cit.

clothing, while the national sample of homemaking teachers reported 33 per cent of their class time was spent on clothing. The foods area followed closely behind the clothing area at Hadley (34 per cent), Kansas (33 per cent), and the nation (30 per cent). The area of family relations received more attention than the other remaining areas of home economics: the nation (7 per cent), Kansas (5 per cent), and Hadley (5 per cent). All other areas including child development; health and care of the sick; management of time, energy, and money; consumer education; and housing are included in the ninth-grade homemaking program, but are generally integrated and taught along with the areas of clothing, foods, and family relations. In other words, they receive relatively little attention as separate units of instruction.

Effective learning experiences in any course of study are those that are established around the needs of pupils. Moser has described the developmental needs of the adolescent girl as follows:

As a girl grows, there are special problems that she must solve, and adjustments that she must make to the people and world about her. The problems she must solve arise out of inner pressures based on her biological maturing. The adjustments she must make arise out of the expectancies of the culture in which she lives. Both must be met successfully if the girl is to progress satisfactorily with vigor and confidence to the next stage. Because these problems and these adjustments come in a definite pattern and about the



same stage of development for all girls, they are called developmental tasks.<sup>1</sup>

Prescott has listed the following as the developmental tasks which the early adolescent girl in our society faces:

1. Learning the significance of the physical changes occurring as a result of growth, especially of the maturing of her reproductive capacity, and learning how to maintain health at the new maturity level.
2. Learning ways of grooming, dressing, and behaving that are appropriate to her sex and effective in attracting favorable attention from boys, other girls, and adults.
3. Learning how to get along well with boys in the light of her new body dynamics and maturity level.
4. Learning how to get along well with girls in the light of her new heterosexual roles and maturity level.
5. Winning and effectively playing adolescent peer-group roles in the school and community.
6. Winning from parents the right to make decisions and to be responsible for a wider range of her own behavior.
7. Maintaining security-giving love relationships with her parents despite her striving for greater freedom to make decisions for herself.
8. Continuing her successful accomplishment of school tasks and winning adult approval in and about school.
9. Learning about and participating in social institutions and processes, and learning her duties and responsibilities as a citizen.
10. Exploring possible adult roles such as home-making, caring for children, taking part in community affairs, and choosing a vocation.
11. Exploring questions about the meaning of life and about the values to be sought in life.
12. Continuing the development of a code of ethics as a measuring stick for evaluating her own attitudes and her actual behavior.
13. Setting up goals for immediate accomplishment as a step toward long-term purposes.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Clarence G. Moser, Toward Understanding Girls in Early Adolescence, pp. 3-5.

<sup>2</sup>Daniel A. Prescott, The Child in the Educative Process, pp. 161-7.

Coon described certain opportunities that might be given in a homemaking classroom for satisfying developmental needs. She wrote:

The tasks of early adolescents indicate that most are ready to profit by a study of friendships and of ways to plan and carry through simple forms of hospitality. Their growing interest in personal appearance provides a basis for help in grooming and care of clothing and a study of ways in which food habits and nutrition may contribute to their personal attractiveness. They enjoy preparing nutritious snacks and simple meals, and planning for these as a part of a well-chosen diet. Some skill in the care of clothing and the house and in the preparation of food is of interest to many, and these skills often serve to win approval from other members of the family. Detailed help is usually needed in establishing efficient and sanitary work habits, so that time and energy may be saved in the more routine activities.<sup>1</sup>

Home economics courses dealing mainly with food preparation and clothing construction probably do not provide the types of learning experiences most needed by the adolescent girl today. Other opportunities, besides those in the areas of foods and clothing, for satisfying the developmental needs and tasks of girls in early adolescence include: grooming and desirable health practices, friendships and dating, family relations, understanding and caring for children, and home care of the sick.

As pupils pursue a wide range of interests, they may be assisted in drawing generalizations from several areas to

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<sup>1</sup>Beulah I. Coon, Home Economics Instruction in the Secondary Schools, pp. 38-9.

serve as guides for their later actions and decisions. Chadderdon stressed that one outcome of teaching should be the ability to generalize.

As a result of effective teaching it is expected that pupils not only will come to integrate the basic concepts and generalizations but also will use these in solving problems which arise throughout life.<sup>1</sup>

Pupils mature and develop in many ways at the same time. Since homemaking is a group of related skills and responsibilities and could be taught so that pupils see the total picture, it would appear that the best home economics education may not only be taught as an integrated subject, as opposed to isolated units of instruction, but may also be integrated with other subjects. For example, snacks or a meal might be prepared for the French club after a study of French food. If pupils are writing themes about vocations for an English class, a bulletin board showing various job possibilities in home economics may inspire more pupils to investigate the field.

Meaningful repetition has value in aiding learning, but repetition per se can be boring. However, having an idea or principle presented again, but from a different viewpoint in a somewhat different context, can be exciting to learners. Learning makes more sense when meaningful relationships are recognized.

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<sup>1</sup>Hester Chadderdon, "Evaluation and Research," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 48:66, December, 1964.

### Sex of Pupils

The majority of respondents (93 per cent) did not feel that girls received training for homemaking at home and, therefore, that they needed to study homemaking at school. Only two respondents (4 per cent) claimed that girls receive adequate preparation for homemaking at home.

All but two respondents (95 per cent) felt that homemaking should be an elective for boys, while considerably fewer respondents (37 per cent) thought that boys should be required to take at least one homemaking course. Twenty per cent of the respondents thought that it was desirable for boys to prepare for "earning a living," even if it meant that they would not be able to take a homemaking course.

Hadley Junior High School does not offer any opportunities in homemaking for boys, but does require all eighth-grade girls to enroll. Homemaking courses are elective for ninth-grade girls.

In order to assist in meeting their developmental needs, Conant recommended that all girls in grades seven and eight should receive instruction in home economics, while in the ninth grade these subjects should be elective so that pupils could maintain their interest and further their skills if they wished to do so.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>James B. Conant, Education in the Junior High School Years, p. 16.

The report by the Panel of Consultants on Vocational Education, made at the request of the late President John F. Kennedy, also emphasized education in home economics for junior high and senior high school girls. The recommendations of the Panel were supported by statistics: 53 per cent of all girls between the ages of fifteen and nineteen are, or have been, married. One out of every three brides has had a child before she was twenty years old.<sup>1</sup> These girls need training in home economics which will enable them to meet their responsibilities as wives, homemakers, and mothers.

Although boys usually mature somewhat later than girls, most of the developmental tasks listed by Prescott also apply to boys.<sup>2</sup> Many educators seem to take it for granted that homemaking is for girls only, while others think it quite natural that homemaking responsibilities include boys, as well as girls. Noar, discussing the practical arts program in the junior high schools, expressed the following viewpoint:

A new look at the entire practical arts program is mandatory for the junior high school of tomorrow, . . . segregation by sex is no longer justified. Patterns of home life, and the roles played by men and women there and in business and industry have changed. . . .<sup>3</sup> Few families operate with and through a woman alone.

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<sup>1</sup>Education for a Changing World of Work, pp. 3-5.

<sup>2</sup>Daniel A. Prescott, The Child in the Educative Process, pp. 161-7.

<sup>3</sup>Gertrude Noar, The Junior High School Today and Tomorrow, p. 225.



A school principal agreed with Noar and had this to say:

Since most men and women eventually become home-makers, we should be alert for ways in which to stimulate a realistic interest in the various aspects of home living. While the women may be more directly concerned with certain aspects of family life, the men, too, are concerned with foods, clothing, leisure time activities, housing, income management, child growth and development, health, and family relations. Principals should encourage boys to take part in the homemaking program.<sup>1</sup>

However, Coon's study revealed that only 1 per cent (63,000) of the boys enrolled in all public secondary schools which offered home economics were taking advantage of these courses. This was compared to 49 per cent (2,353,000) of the girls who were enrolled in homemaking courses.<sup>2</sup>

#### Ability Level of Pupils

Nearly all respondents (97 per cent) agreed that homemaking classes are for all pupils of all ability levels and that pupils benefit from knowing and working with others of abilities different from their own (93 per cent). The homemaking program of Hadley Junior High School provides opportunities for girls to work with others of all ability

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<sup>1</sup>George G. Dozier, "A Principal's View: Issues in Home Economics," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 47:70, November, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Beulah I. Coon, Home Economics in the Public Secondary Schools, p. 13.



levels. All classes are heterogeneous in nature and have no grouping other than that which may be done in the classroom.

One of the major problems in home economics education has been to find a method for teaching pupils that would satisfy the needs of each pupil and, at the same time, utilize the best teaching techniques. Green was especially concerned that junior high homemaking teachers sometimes fail to meet the needs of the gifted and more able pupils. She characterized the more able pupil as follows:

She is apt to be advanced in physical as well as intellectual development. She learns quickly and her attention span is longer than that of the average student unless the pace of the learning experience is too slow or filled with monotonous repetition. She wants to know reasons why learnings or activities are necessary, and the principles that apply to them. She sees relationships more easily and will be interested in following through in studying a particular line of thought. She enjoys learning and exploring the unknown. She is apt to be critical of herself and worried about the future.<sup>1</sup>

The homemaking teacher also has unique responsibilities to "average" and "slow" learners. Although complete statistics are not available on the percentage of slow learners in homemaking classes, it is not unusual for these pupils to comprise a fairly large proportion of vocational classes. Homemaking is not alone in its responsibility to teach the slower pupils, but its subject matter coincides with many of their immediate

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<sup>1</sup>Sara C. Green, "Too Little? Too Late? Or Both?," What's New in Home Economics, 27:51, November-December, 1963.

and future needs. The homemaking curriculum may be planned to prepare each girl in relation to immediate needs including living in the home, making and holding friends, getting and keeping a job, and developing healthful and socially acceptable practices, and for her eventual role as a homemaker, wife, and mother.

The homemaking teachers of Hadley have experimented with dividing heterogeneous classes, where assignment to classes was by grade in school only, into groups of a more homogeneous nature. In the latter, pupils of similar abilities are taught together. Some measure of ability, such as intelligence test scores, past grades, or past homemaking experiences, were used as a basis for grouping.

One clothing class at Hadley was divided into three groups. The group to which a pupil was assigned depended upon her past clothing experiences; past homemaking grades; and what the pupil, her mother, and the teacher thought about her abilities. Each pupil in the first group made a simple straight dress without sleeves, collar, zipper, or waistline seam. The "average" group made a simple sleeveless, collarless, dress that had a waistline seam and a zipper. The more advanced group worked with a more complicated pattern with a collar and set-in sleeves.

Throughout the school term, each pupil advanced or changed groups as she and the teacher deemed desirable.

This version of an "ungraded" plan removed the fear of failure from slow learners, while pupils of average and high ability profited because they could work up to their capacities without interfering with the work of others.

Role of Home Economics in Vocational Education and as an Encouragement to Stay in School

Most of the mothers (93 per cent) felt that homemaking classes prepare girls for taking care of a family and/or for a job outside the home. Seventy-four per cent believed that job possibilities should be emphasized in homemaking classes.

The passage of Public Law 88-210 placed an emphasis on the preparation of pupils in home economics for gainful employment. As a result of this act, home economics teachers are charged with the responsibility of preparing pupils for wage earning, as well as for the vocation of homemaking.

The homemaking teachers of Hadley have stressed vocational opportunities in homemaking this past school term and plan to strengthen the unit on careers next year. Even though the Wichita curriculum guide does not suggest a unit on vocational opportunities in homemaking, these teachers developed and taught a short unit on careers in home economics. They formed a team, combined their classes, and spent a week, or five lessons, on this unit. Activities included guest speakers, film strips, and reading about

careers related to home economics. Mothers were invited to attend some of these classes. The role of home economics in the world of work was discussed.

Most respondents (93 per cent) thought that homemaking courses could be of great value to the pupil who may drop out of school. Hadley Junior High School has not had a drop-out problem. During the 1963-64 school term, only 3 of a total enrollment of 896 pupils (May 29, 1964) left school. One explanation for this is that Kansas laws GS 72-48012 through GS 72-4805 require pupils to remain in school through the eighth grade, or the age of sixteen. Most junior high school pupils have not reached their sixteenth birthday.

Preparing pupils for wage earning is one way in which to motivate potential school drop-outs to stay in school. Homemaking courses at Hadley Junior High School could provide girls and boys opportunities to be better employees, whatever their chosen vocation, and could provide some insight into careers available to those who have home economics knowledge and skills. General areas which might be considered could include economic concerns, human relationships, budgeting, and grooming. Dennis described training for wage-earning as one of the purposes for home economics education today.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Catherine T. Dennis, "Re-Examination of the Purposes of Home Economics at the Secondary Level," Illinois Teacher of Home Economics, 8, No.1: 3-12, Fall, 1964.

Lawson concurred when she wrote:

Home economics is the field of knowledge and service primarily concerned with strengthening family life. A primary goal of vocational home economics has been and continues to be that of preparing for the vocation of homemaking. Current and predicted changes in our society make it wise to add a wage-earning focus as a part of this goal.<sup>1</sup>

The focus on wage-earning was also identified as an important responsibility of vocational home economics by Spafford.

. . . Students in home economics should come to know themselves better--their assets and liabilities for occupations. The field has much to offer in increasing the general employability and job satisfaction of all young people. Many types of occupations grow out of home economics, some a semi-skilled type, others of a highly professional nature.<sup>2</sup>

#### Desirability of Home Practice of Classroom Experiences

Respondents indicated almost unanimous support for home practice of classroom learnings. Only one respondent said that home practice was not desirable. One respondent was uncertain about the desirability of home practice in another item of the opinionnaire, but all other respondents (98 per cent) thought home practice was necessary if the homemaking pupil was going to benefit the most from her classroom experiences.

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<sup>1</sup>Dorothy Lawson, "Is There a New Vocational Purpose in Home Economics Education?" A New Look at the Vocational Purposes of Home Economics Education, pp. 5-6.

<sup>2</sup>Ivel Spafford, A Functioning Program of Home Economics, p. 249.



Unlike other school subjects, home economics has a ready-made, supplementary laboratory available--the homes of the community. Study outside the scheduled classes can be laboratory in nature, using the realistic situation of home and community for practical application of learning. In this manner, learning makes more sense because meaningful relations are recognized.

In some cases, the homemaking teachers of Hadley Junior High School require home experiences, such as the five food preparations which pupils are asked to do at home each semester. At other times they encourage, but do not require, home practice. An example of this is the garments which are made outside of the classroom. However, since many of the homemaking skills learned in the homemaking classroom are immediately transferable to the home, it is anticipated that many pupils do practice at home what they learn at school.

Activities carried out at home could be considered as an integral part of the teaching-learning situation. The homemaking teachers of Hadley Junior High School could plan, supervise, and evaluate these activities so that both the pupil and her parents clearly perceive the value of these activities. In this way, pupils may come to realize the relationship of home experiences and practice to the class goals.



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND GUIDELINES FOR A PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

#### Background for the Problem

Effective programs of home economics in the public schools can strengthen communication between the home and the school. Educators in home economics have repeatedly emphasized the importance of a close teacher-parent relationship. In general, educators feel that teachers and parents need to become acquainted so that they can work together effectively. It appears important, then, that teachers of home economics provide meaningful, appropriate, and up-to-date learnings and that avenues of communication between parents and teachers be kept open so that both can work together effectively.

#### Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were: (1) to identify concepts of home economics held by mothers whose ninth-grade daughters were currently enrolled in the homemaking program of Hadley Junior High School, Wichita, Kansas, and areas of learning these mothers felt should be included in the homemaking program; (2) to compare these concepts with present curricula and philosophy; and (3) to recommend procedures for building an effective public relations program for Hadley Junior High School.

### Procedures

An opinioinaire was sent to all of the mothers whose ninth-grade daughters were currently enrolled in the home-making program of Hadley Junior High School, Wichita, Kansas. The opinioinaire was preceded by a data sheet which dealt with information about the respondent and her family.

Part I investigated the concepts of home economics held by mothers, while Part II dealt with areas of home economics which mothers felt their daughters should have the opportunity to study. Part III dealt with the sources of information and opinions of the mothers and asked for suggestions for improving communications between the home and the school.

In order to compare concepts held by respondents with the present teaching curricula, the results of the opinioinaire were summarized and analyzed in relation to ninth-grade curriculum practices for home economics in Hadley Junior High School in Wichita and current philosophy of home economics in the secondary school. Comparisons between ideas expressed by respondents and present curriculum practices and philosophy were made in relation to the scope and content of courses, sex and ability level of pupils; the role of home economics in preparing learners for a vocation and in helping to counteract the drop-out problem; and the desirability of home practice of classroom experiences. Recommendations for

curriculum changes and for augmenting communication between parents and teachers were made.

### Findings

A "typical" respondent to the opinionnaire was described as a mother not employed outside the home, with a husband who was either a salesman, a building construction worker, or an office worker. She had three children, one or two of whom had been or was currently enrolled in a homemaking course at Hadley Junior High School, while she herself had taken some homemaking either as a junior high or a senior high school pupil.

Responses indicated awareness that most homemaking class time is spent on the areas of foods and clothing. Mothers approved of this time allotment, as long as the other areas of home economics were taught at the same time and integrated with the areas of foods and clothing. They also felt that: homemaking courses should be elective for boys and required for girls; homemaking classes are for pupils of all ability levels; homemaking classes prepare girls for taking care of a family and for working outside the home; homemaking classes can be of great value to the pupil who may drop out of school; and home practice is necessary if the homemaking pupil is to benefit the most from her school experiences.

In general, respondents appeared to feel that homemaking courses would be helpful to their daughters, both at home and as preparation for a job. Those respondents who said they would not encourage their daughters to take more home economics indicated a variety of reasons, the most common being crowded class schedules. This was the most frequent criticism of the homemaking classes at Hadley Junior High School. Some mothers felt that their daughters needed more individual attention in the home economics classroom than they were receiving. They reported that one of the best things about the homemaking program at Hadley was that their daughters were learning to cook and sew. They also liked the modern equipment, facilities, and teaching methods.

Respondents said that they generally learned about the homemaking program at Hadley from their daughters and their friends. They suggested that they could learn more about the program by visiting with the teachers; from samples, bulletins, notices, and pamphlets which could be sent home; newspaper articles; home assignments; school displays; associations with 4-H and extension clubs; and school activities, such as style shows. Most of the mothers were in favor of visiting the homemaking classes of their daughters.

Slightly more than one-half of the mothers said that this study was the first opportunity that they had had to

express their feelings or opinions about homemaking to teachers or administrators.

### Guide lines for Public Relations in Home Economics

It appears that the most important feature of effective public relations, that is the acquisition of the interest, understanding, and confidence of people, depends upon the personal contact of the homemaking teacher with the home. Since most mothers appear to learn about the homemaking program indirectly through their daughters and their friends, the homemaking teacher must first sell her program to her pupils who will, in turn, sell it to their parents.

Hoffman and Hoeflin described the role of home economics teachers and home economists in promoting their field:

Our aim in telling the home economics story is twofold: to inform adult leaders about the professional opportunities in home economics today; and to inform young people about the importance of higher education and the value of a university degree in home economics.<sup>1</sup>

Although these home economists were concerned with promoting college programs, their recommendations could be applied to the secondary program. They suggested four basic principles as guides in establishing an effective public relations program. First, find opportunities for personal

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<sup>1</sup>Doretta Hoffman and Ruth Hoeflin, "We Tell the Home Economics Story," Journal of Home Economics, 55:704, November, 1963.



contacts. Make each contact unforgettable, as with visual aids or attention-catching quotations. Ask others, such as school counselors, to help. And, finally, collect and write materials that will enhance the image of home economics. All of these suggestions could be used by the secondary home economics teacher in informing her public about the home economics program and encouraging enrollment in home economics classes.

In presenting the "ideal image" of home economics, as defined by the American Home Economics Association, home economists want to say that theirs is a dynamic profession which:

- comprises college graduates with unique professional qualifications
- concerns itself with human problems and helps to solve them
- has high standards
- includes careers in a wide range of specializations.<sup>1</sup>

In line with these ideals, the Association has well-established goals for a public information program. Those which relate to this study are:

1. Building in the public's mind the knowledge that home economics is a body of subject matter based on research, on scientific principles, and on the knowledge gained by application of this research and these principles to homes and family living

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<sup>1</sup>Mabel Todd Towell, "Straight Talk about Public Relations," Journal of Home Economics, 56:293, May, 1964.



2. Informing the world of education about the essential role of home economics in modern curricula at all levels of education

3. Building awareness of the vital place of modern homemaking principles in family life as a means of increasing enrollment in home economics courses and of attaining public recognition of the profession

4. Informing editors and broadcasters of home economics material available and encouraging them to quote qualified home economists in their material related to homes and family living, in order to build in the public's mind the realization that professionals (or professionally trained persons) are necessary in these areas just as they are in areas covered by other professions<sup>1</sup>

Hoffman said that the home economist should be ever alert to the image she is projecting. Even when she is having her picture taken, she should check to see if she is projecting this "ideal image." Her check list asked if the picture of the home economist described its subject as a professional person who:

- .works in a creative decision-making job
- .does important and essential work
- .is intellectually-endowed
- .works with interesting people
- .is a vital, attractive person
- .is an expert
- .is up-to-date
- .is dedicated . . . and respected.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Public Relations - Person to Person," Journal of Home Economics, 52:685, October, 1960

<sup>2</sup>Doretta S. Hoffman, "Straight Talk about Public Relations," Journal of Home Economics, February, 1964, p. 79.

These recommendations may serve as guide lines for the development of effective public relations programs in relation to home economics. Specific recommendations for the Hadley Junior High School public relations program in home economics follow.

Developing Effective Public Relations for Home Economics at Hadley Junior High School

It appears that one important feature of an effective school-home public relations program for the homemaking department of Hadley Junior High School is contact, both direct and indirect, between parents and teachers. Homemaking teachers need to find opportunities for personal contacts with parents. Because their time schedules do not provide time for home visits, most of their contacts with the school public will be through pupils and with groups of parents or mothers at school, as at open house. Some specific suggestions for contacting groups of parents follow.

1. Introduce the homemaking program for the forthcoming year to the mothers at the beginning of the school term. This meeting could include all of the mothers who have daughters who will be enrolled in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grade homemaking classes. In this manner, a brief review of what each grade will be studying may be outlined so that mothers can see how the work which her daughter will be doing is related to earlier and/or later study in homemaking.

A mimeographed hand-out would clarify the learnings of each grade level and provide greater understanding of the homemaking program as a whole on the junior high school level. Mothers may be invited to make suggestions for changes in the homemaking program, and these suggestions could be used when they are appropriate and feasible.

2. The mothers may visit the homemaking department for Parent Advisory Council reports. Each school has two representatives on this council, which meets several times during the school year with representatives from the other junior and senior high schools of Wichita. These representatives return to their school to report about these meetings. The homemaking teachers of Hadley have not always provided opportunity for their representatives to report back to the parents. Parent Advisory Council meetings provide opportunities for the city supervisor to up-date mothers on the latest developments in the homemaking program of Wichita and for mothers to ask questions about the program.

3. The style shows of Hadley have been infrequent and have been held in the clothing classroom during the day when only the mothers who were not working could attend. Following a suggestion of one of the mothers, these smaller style shows could be combined into a larger style show at one of the Parent Teacher Association meetings. The script for the show may be written to include careers in home

economics and activities of the homemaking department of Hadley, with emphasis on those areas other than foods and clothing. Clothing purchased ready-made may be modeled to emphasize the consumer economics principles taught in home economics. This would inform more parents, pupils, and teachers.

4. The Parent Teacher Association sponsors a school paper which also provides opportunity for home contacts. The paper is mailed to every family which has a child enrolled at Hadley. Descriptions of homemaking projects and activities would be interesting to all who read the paper.

5. Mothers and their friends may be invited to attend classes during American Home Economics Week or American Education Week. These classes might be studying understanding and caring for the preschool child, new developments in household equipment, or new fabrics and textiles on the market.

6. In addition to direct contact with parents and pupils, other media for promoting public relations might be samples of materials distributed and/or pupils' production, bulletins, notices, and pamphlets which pupils could take home. School displays could exhibit classroom projects. The homemaking teacher could find additional outlets for expanding and informing her audience through 4-H and extension clubs, church and church groups, women's clubs and civic clubs, business and trade organizations, youth organizations,

industrial and business firms, and adult education classes. She could participate at state fairs, both in judging and in setting up booths. She could help to organize materials for radio and television programs to inform the public about her field.

Certain aspects of program development may aid in promoting the home economics program.

1. There appears to be a need for certain curriculum revisions or enrichment or both and for parents to understand that the homemaking program is current, dynamic, and based on pupil needs. For reasons already discussed, the scope and content of the homemaking program of Hadley cannot be changed drastically until the Wichita curriculum guide is revised. Mothers in this study were aware that most homemaking class time is spent on the areas of foods and clothing. They approved of this time allotment, as long as other areas of home economics are taught at the same time and integrated with the areas of foods and clothing. This is presently being done by the homemaking teachers of Hadley. For example, safety is taught in the kitchen and at the sewing machine and these safety principles are applied to other classroom and home situations. Consumer buying of foods and fabrics are related to expenditures in the family's budget. However, important areas of subject matter may not be clearly identified when taught incidentally.



2. Homemaking opportunities for boys at Hadley should be given special attention since boys do not have any opportunities in home economics available to them now. Because one of the first steps in establishing an effective public relations program is to obtain the support of parents, opportunities for boys in homemaking at Hadley should be introduced gradually. For instance, a homemaking club for boys might be organized. The clubs at Hadley meet after school so that attendance at first might be very limited. Interest in homemaking enrollment might grow if club activities were planned in line with current philosophy and needs of pupils. This might eventually lead to pupil and parental request for a credit course during the school day for the junior high school boys of Hadley.

3. Certain types of ability grouping within classes might make learnings more meaningful to pupils. Such grouping could provide opportunity for teachers to reach each pupil at the level of her own capabilities and needs while still giving pupils opportunity to work with others of abilities different from their own.

Homogeneous grouping, that is grouping each class so that it contains only slow, average, or fast learners, probably should not be employed at Hadley unless there is careful consideration and preparation by the faculty, the pupils, and the parents. The philosophy of education of all those



concerned must include the idea that differences in mental and scholastic abilities are as natural as physical differences. There should be no stigma attached to pupils who are in any one of the groups. Pupils and parents should understand that the purpose of ability grouping is to provide a learning situation where all pupils may learn more. The success of homogeneous grouping depends upon the attitudes toward and understanding of grouping by the pupils, their parents, and the faculty.

4. Pupils and parents should be helped to learn about the opportunities which training in the field of home economics offers. At Hadley, a special unit on careers focuses attention upon these opportunities, but this information also needs to be integrated with other units of instruction throughout the school term. This is a challenge which provides an unique opportunity for the homemaking teacher to change her "foods and clothing" public image. With the explosion of knowledge, the economic development of the nation, mobility of our population, and lengthening life span, new demands will be placed upon the woman of tomorrow. The homemaking teacher might publicize vocational possibilities, both semi-skilled and professional, for which home economics provides training. She can describe the advantages of training in home economics for the expanding role of the wife and mother as a homemaker and as a wage-earner.

5. Home practice of school learnings was wholeheartedly supported by mothers in this study. Home practice of classroom learnings is an ideal way to show parents what is being done in the classroom. Applying principles learned at school to situations at home is one of the best means to insure that learnings will be used.

The homemaking teachers need to be concerned with relationships with pupils as well as with parents. Good relationships with pupils are important since they are their parents' chief source of information about the homemaking program at Hadley and the impression which the homemaking teacher has upon pupils could either discourage or encourage them to further their studies in home economics.

In all contacts with the public, the homemaking teachers of Hadley need to follow the previously reported goals of the American Home Economics Association for fulfilling their "ideal image." In applying these goals to Hadley, they might read as follows:

1. To instill in the school public's mind the knowledge that home economics is an integrated body of subject matter based on research and scientific principles
2. To inform the school public that home economics is an important area of study for boys as well as girls at all levels of education
3. To build an awareness of the vital place of modern homemaking principles in family and community life

4. To supply the public in general and parents in particular with accurate, up-to-date information about home economics and its role in education

The homemaking teachers of Hadley must convince their audience that their field is one which is creative and requires decision-making, is important and essential, and is up-to-date. Contacts with the public, whether direct, as in a parent-teacher conference, or indirect, as in a photo in the school annual, must tell all of these things about home economics teachers and their field. The homemaking teacher who is always photographed in a starched white uniform in the foods laboratory or at the sewing machine cannot help but give the public the impression that home economics is mainly foods and clothing. If home economics teachers want to project an up-to-date public image, they must present such an image to their public.

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APPENDIX

The following statements have been developed to discover the ideas of home economics held by the mothers of ninth-grade pupils of Hadley Junior High, Wichita, Kansas. The opinionnaire is composed of three parts and a data sheet.

The data sheet deals with information about you and your family. Please circle the best answer or briefly answer the questions in the space provided. In the first and second parts you are asked to consider each statement and rate your agreement or disagreement by placing a check in the appropriate column at the right.

The third part deals with sources of your information and opinions about homemaking classes and asks for suggestions in improving communications between your home and the school. Like the data sheet, these questions require short answers.

Your name should not appear anywhere on the opinionnaire. All questions should be completed without help from any other family member. Please have your daughter return the completed opinionnaire to her homemaking teacher.

Thank you for helping to make this study a success.

## OPINIONS ABOUT HOME ECONOMICS

## Data Sheet

Circle the best answer or answer the question briefly in the space provided.

ABOUT YOU

1. What is your relationship to the student?

Mother	Aunt
Grandmother	Sister
Step Mother	Other

(Please identify)

2. Have you worked at a job outside the home during the past year?

Yes

No

3. What kind of work have you done for pay during the past year?

Beauty Shop  
Bookkeeping  
Child Care  
Cook or Kitchen

Housework  
Ironing  
Sales  
Secretarial

Sewing  
Teaching  
Waitress  
Other

(Please identify)

4. How many years of home economics did you have in junior high school? \_\_\_\_\_ In high school? \_\_\_\_\_ In college? \_\_\_\_\_

ABOUT YOUR FAMILY

5. What kind of work does your husband do?

Aircraft plant  
Building Construction  
Civil Service  
Engineering  
Highway or Road Construction

Mechanical  
Medical or Dental  
Military Service  
Office  
Radio, TV, or Newspaper

Sales  
Teaching  
Truck Driving  
Other

(Please identify)

6. How many children do you have? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
More than 10
7. How many of these children have had at least one-half of a year of homemaking? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

## PART I

Consider each statement and rate your agreement or disagreement. Please indicate your most accurate response by placing a check in the appropriate column at the right of each statement.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un- certain	Dis- agree	Strongly Disagree
8. Students benefit from knowing and working with others of different abilities.					
9. Today's emphasis in homemaking should be upon the growth and development of family members and relationships with other people					
10. Since boys must prepare for "earning a living," it is probably not desirable for them to take any courses in homemaking.					
11. Homemaking is a group of related skills and responsibilities and should be taught so that students see the total picture.					
12. Homemaking classes are for all students, superior, as well as average and slow learners.					
13. Homemaking classes prepare girls for taking care of a family and/or a career.					
14. Practice at home of the experiences gained from homemaking classes is <u>not</u> desirable.					



Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un-certain	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree
15. Most homemaking class time is spent on foods and clothing because it takes so long to master these skills.					
16. Generally speaking, homemaking classes are designed for slow and average students.					
17. Girls do <u>not</u> need homemaking courses at school because they receive this training at home.					
18. Less class time should be spent on foods and clothing so that more time could be given to learning to understand and care for children, time and money management, and family relations.					
19. Boys should be able to take homemaking courses if they want to.					
20. Homemaking courses are of little value to students who will probably <u>not</u> finish high school.					
21. Because men are part of a family, boys should be required to take at least one homemaking course.					
22. Depending upon what a girl learns at home, homemaking courses may or may <u>not</u> be valuable to the student.					

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un- certain	Dis- agree	Strongly Disagree
23. The main concern in homemaking courses is a better understanding of home and family living.					
24. Practice at home is needed if the homemaking student is going to benefit the most from her classroom experiences.					
25. Too much emphasis in homemaking classes is placed upon preparing girls for working outside the home.					
26. Homemaking courses can be of great value to the pupil who may drop out of school.					
27. The job possibilities in homemaking should be emphasized in order to prepare girls for earning a living.					

## PART II

Areas of homemaking which girls should have opportunity to learn about in homemaking classes at Hadley Junior High School include

Area of homemaking	Strongly Agree	Agree	Un- certain	Dis- agree	Strongly Disagree
28. Understanding children					
29. Using money wisely					
30. Getting along with family members					
31. Sewing and repairing simple garments					
32. Caring for children					
33. Understanding herself as a person					
34. Planning simple meals					
35. Performing household tasks					
36. Understanding the family's growth and development					
37. Shopping for groceries					
38. Being a good friend					
39. Preparing foods and simple meals					
40. Sharing responsibilities in the home					
41. Learning to choose clothes for herself					
42. Other areas of homemaking which should be included in the classes are					

## PART III

43. Complete one of the following three sentences which most closely expresses your opinion or point of view.
- A. I will encourage my daughter to take more home economics because
  - B. I will not encourage my daughter to take more home economics because
  - C. I would like for my daughter to take more home economics, but she cannot or will not because

Briefly answer each question in the space provided

44. One of the best things about the homemaking classes at Hadley is
45. My chief criticism of the homemaking classes at Hadley is
46. This fault could be eased or eliminated by
47. I usually learn about the homemaking classes at Hadley from
48. I have also learned about the homemaking classes at Hadley from

49. I could learn more about homemaking and the homemaking classes at Hadley by
50. Hadley could help me to know more about its homemaking classes by
51. Our homemaking teacher could help me know more about the homemaking classes at Hadley by
52. Wichita could help us to know more about homemaking classes by
53. Do you think that it would be a good idea to invite mothers to attend their daughters' homemaking classes? Why?
54. Have you had opportunity to express your feelings or opinions about homemaking to teachers or administrators prior to this time? Tell about this briefly.
55. What other ideas or opinions would you like to express about homemaking classes at Hadley?

CONCEPTS ABOUT HOME ECONOMICS HELD BY MOTHERS OF NINTH-GRADE  
HOMEMAKING PUPILS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR A JUNIOR  
HIGH SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

by

ROSETTA SNYDER DURNER

B. S., Kansas State University, 1961

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A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

School of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
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Approved by:

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Major Professor



Effective programs of home economics in the public schools can strengthen communication between the home and the school. Educators in home economics have repeatedly emphasized the importance of a close teacher-parent relationship. In general, educators feel that teachers and parents need to become acquainted so that they can work together effectively.

The purposes of this study were: (1) to identify concepts of home economics held by mothers whose ninth-grade daughters were currently enrolled in the homemaking program of Hadley Junior High School, Wichita, Kansas, and areas of learning these mothers felt should be included in the homemaking program; (2) to compare these concepts with present curricula and philosophy; and (3) to recommend procedures for building an effective public relations program for Hadley Junior High School.

An opinioinaire was sent to all of the mothers whose ninth-grade daughters were currently enrolled in the home-making program of Hadley Junior High School. The opinioinaire was preceded by a data sheet which dealt with information about the respondent and her family.

Part I investigated the concepts of home economics held by mothers, while Part II dealt with areas of home economics which mothers felt their daughters should have opportunity to study. Part III dealt with the sources of

information and opinions of the mothers and asked for suggestions for improving communications between the home and the school.

A "typical" respondent to the opinionnaire was described as a mother not employed outside the home, with a husband who was either a salesman, a building construction worker, or an office worker. She had three children, one or two of whom had been or was currently enrolled in a home-making course at Hadley Junior High School, while she herself had taken some homemaking either as a junior or senior high school pupil.

Responses indicated awareness that most homemaking class time is spent on the areas of foods and clothing. Mothers approved of this time allotment, as long as the other areas of home economics were taught at the same time and integrated with the areas of foods and clothing. They also felt that: homemaking courses should be elective for boys and required for girls; homemaking classes are for pupils of all ability levels; homemaking classes prepare girls for taking care of a family and for working outside the home; homemaking classes can be of great value to the pupil who may drop out of school; and home practice is necessary if the homemaking pupil is to benefit the most from her school experiences.

The scope and content of the homemaking program cannot be changed until the Wichita curriculum guide is revised. However, recommendations for enriching the curriculum included integrating other areas of home economics with the areas of foods and clothing and emphasizing that this is being done, providing opportunities in homemaking for boys, grouping pupils in the heterogeneous classroom situation into smaller groups of pupils of similar abilities, telling the opportunities which training in the field of home economics offers, and encouraging home practice of school learnings.

It appears that the most important feature of effective public relations depends upon personal contact of the home-making teacher with parents and others in the community. Therefore, the homemaking teachers of Hadley need to find opportunities for personal contacts, both direct and indirect, with the public. In each contact, they will want to convince their audience that their field is one which is creative and requires decision-making, is important and essential, and is up-to-date.